## REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the time taken by the Examiner to review Applicant's present application. This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Official Action mailed February 3, 2005. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

## Claim Objections

Claim 27 stands currently objected to because the "multiplexer" in line 3 should read "demultiplexer". Applicant appreciates the Examiner pointing out this informality and has amended Claim 27 accordingly.

## Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 10-15, 23, 26-33 stand rejected as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,822,975 ("Antosik") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,457,080 ("Sherman").

Claim 1 has been amended to recite "generating timing data for each of the plurality of input client data signals and constructing the corresponding output client data signals . . . wherein the client timing data is generated based on the bit rates of the received input client data signals," Claim 10 has been amended to recite "generating client timing data for each of a plurality of received input client data signals, wherein the client timing data for each of the low-bit-rate data signals is generated based on the bit-rate of that low-bit data signal," Claim 12 has been amended to recite a multiplexer configured to "map timing data for each low-bit-rate input data signal to the unused overhead of the high-bit-rate data signal, wherein the timing data is generated at the multiplexer based on the bit rates of the received low-bit-rate data signals," and Claim 30 has been to recite "wherein the timing data is generated at the multiplexer based on the bit rates of the received low-bit-rate data signals." Each of these claims shares the common feature that the timing data for each of the low-bit rate signals or client input signals is generated based on the bit rates of the received input signals.

The Examiner states that "Antosik is silent on extracting the payload, overhead data and timing data corresponding to each low-bit-rate input signal from the high-bit rate data signal . . ." and relies on Sherman, FIGURE 2 to show timing data mapped to the overhead of the high-bit-rate signal. More particularly, in rejecting Claims 3 and 8, the Examiner states that Sherman,

fig. 2 box STS-1 #1-3 A1, A2) shows generating the timing data for each of the plurality of input client data signals.

As an initial matter, FIGURE 2 simply illustrates an STS-3 signal that contains three STS-1 signals. This STS-3 signal represents the input signal to the signaling interface 10 of the Sherman invention and Sherman does not discuss how this signal is generated in the first place. See, Sherman, col. 5, lines 15-17. Applicant submits that A1 and A2 in the overhead of the STS-3 frame are simply the A1 and A2 of the embedded STS-1 frame and are the overhead information for the STS-1 signal. Thus, they appear simply to be copies of overhead information already contained in the STS-1 frame. There is no teaching that the A1 and A2 blocks in the overhead of the STS-3 signal are generated based on the bit rate of the received STS-1 frame. In other words, the A1 and A2 blocks are part of the overhead of the lower-bit-rate STS-1 frames that are put in the header of the STS-3 frame and do not include additional timing data generated based on the bit-rates of the received STS-1 frames. Thus there is no teaching or suggestion in Sherman or Antosik that timing data inserted in overhead of the high-bit-rate output signal should be generated based on the bit-rate of the received low-bit-rate input signals. Consequently, neither Sherman nor Antosik teach or suggest each of the features of the independent claims.

Applicant respectfully submits that this is further supported by the "Allowable Subject Matter" section of the Office Action. More specifically, Claims 4 and 9 recite specific methods of generating timing data based on the bit-rates of the received low-bit-rate signal. In suggesting Claims 4 and 9 contain allowable subject matter, the Examiner stated "nothing in the prior art fairly suggests generating the client timing data by counting bits, in view of the teaching of the combination of Antosik and Sherman." Applicant submits that for similar reasons, there is nothing in the prior art that suggests generating the timing data for the input client signals (or input low-bit-rate signals) based on the bit rates of the received signals. Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests allowance of Claims 1, 10, 12 and 30 and the respective dependent Claims.

Applicant has now made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. Other than as explicitly set forth above, this reply does not include an acquiescence to statements, assertions, assumptions, conclusions, or any combination thereof in the Office Action. For the foregoing reasons and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully requests full allowance of the pending claims. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number listed below for prompt action in the event any issues remain.

The Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-3183 of Sprinkle IP Law Group.

Respectfully submitted,

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